

**Software Association of Oregon
Member Spotlight
Sabrix, Inc.**

Mark Lawler Gives Back

Mark Lawler wants to make a difference.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2009 - Back in his freshman year of high school, Mark got a leg up in the form of an internship to teach BASIC programming and maintain the school's Data General Nova minicomputer. That humble start led to a series of internships culminating in eight years of experience by the time he graduated from college. Such early experience, in his eyes, launched him on a very successful, high visibility career in the software industry.

Being the guy he is, Mark wants to give back to the industry that gave him his first chance. So he turns to the SAO.

Programmer, Entrepreneur, Executive

Mark first came to the "Silicon Forest" as a director of R&D and architect for Symantec's Peter Norton Product Group, which relocated him and his family to Oregon when Symantec acquired Central Point Software. But it was at INTERSOLV's PCVS business unit (now part of Serena Software), where he served as director of R&D, that Mark became active in the "1000 by 2000" initiative sponsored by the SAO and the Business Education Compact (BEC).

"The goal was to place 1000 software and technical interns in local companies by the year 2000," Mark explains. "I was able to help many others get the head start that I had enjoyed."

Around that time, Mark also joined a group of technologists – including John Cimral, a former co-chair of the SAO – in forming a new software company, ProSight, that quickly established itself as a leader in application and portfolio management. ProSight expanded for eight years, earning up to \$25M in annual revenue, before being acquired by Primavera.

Mark now serves as the vice president of engineering at Sabrix, a software company started by a group of individuals from Tektronix. Sabrix is a provider of transaction tax management solutions including an enterprise consolidated transaction tax management software solution as well as Sabrix Managed Tax Service (MTS), which combines a SaaS (software-as-a-service) version of their enterprise tax software with the services of tax experts and proven methodologies to allow companies to outsource their entire compliance process to trusted experts. The company has experienced steady if not formidable growth – in fact, from 2007 to 2008 the business saw 329 percent growth. Today, it manages more than \$1.7 trillion in transactions for companies of all sizes, from small businesses to Global 2000 leaders

like Shell and Cisco. The majority of its 200 employees are located right here in Lake Oswego.

Mark has seen the Oregon software industry from a variety of perspectives – programmer, entrepreneur, employer and executive. And after all that experience, he still sees the SAO as the best way for him to give back.

Four Pillars of Service to Oregon Software Firms

Mark is very clear on the many ways he sees that the SAO serves the needs of Oregon software firms:

- **Sharing best practices.** The SAO is the largest and broadest organization for local software companies and information technology groups. It provides the platform for the exchange of best practices and personal experiences through its forums and its Leadership Exchange. “The forums often work together to cross-pollinate expertise and foster new ideas,” Mark explains. “People gain new skills that will help them advance their careers.”
- **Serving the local community.** The SAO TechStart, for example, fosters interest in engineering and programming among young minds in grades K-12. Mark also points out that SAO members are often behind many of the other, non-SAO conferences and groups that make Portland such a vibrant technology hub.
- **Representation at the state level.** “The SAO is the only organization working with the Oregon legislature on how to improve the business climate and to remove barriers, both of which helps the software industry grow,” Mark says.
- **Available, affordable healthcare.** SAO healthcare benefits are especially important to the individuals and small firms that may have difficulty securing healthcare on their own. This benefit is critical for supporting innovative businesses and nurturing the leaders and companies of tomorrow.

These are the primary reasons that Mark has devoted his valuable time to various roles in the SAO, such as chairing the Developers Forum and now serving on the board of directors.

The Organization for All Developers

Over 10 years of giving back through the SAO, Mark has seen first-hand how the organization is both the glue and the rising tide for the entire Oregon software industry.

“SAO gives all of us the community and support to help Oregon software companies, large and small, grow and prosper,” he says. He also appreciates how the organization is extending its focus to the entire range of developers: independent software authors, open source advocates, commercial shrink wrap developers, SaaS vendors, IT professionals and the service providers – such as marketing, hosting and staffing – that assist all of them.

“Don’t misunderstand me. I do want to spread the word about our great work at Sabrix,” Mark says. “But just as important to me personally is helping all Oregon software professionals enjoy the same level of support, and the same great success, as I’ve had.”

Prepared by McClenahan Bruer Communications